

- (e) by affinity chromatography using N-acetylneuraminic acid as a ligand, and
- (f) by reversed-phase high pressure liquid chromatography to separate the peptide or protein.

53. (Amended) The peptide or protein of claim 52, wherein 55 kd and 14 kd bands are recovered if the peptide or protein is subjected to sodium dodecyl sulfate polyacrylamide gel electrophoresis.

54. (Amended) A method for obtaining the peptide or protein of claim 43 comprising sequentially treating a tissue extract containing a lectin:

- (a) with pepsin or at an acidic pH to remove a majority of contaminating proteins while retaining lectinic activity,
- (b) by chromatography using SEPHACRYL S-200[®] (gel filtration media with a fractionation range of 5,000-250,000 daltons for globular proteins),
- (c) by chromatography using diethylaminoethyl cellulose,
- (d) by chromatography using CM-TRISACRYL-M[®] (gel filtration media with a fractionation range of 200-2,500 daltons), and
- (e) by affinity chromatography using N-acetylneuraminic acid as a ligand.

57. (Amended) The method of claim 54, comprising, after (e), treating the extract by high pressure liquid chromatography.

58. (Amended) The method of claim 57, wherein the high pressure liquid chromatography is conducted using water/acetonitrile/trifluoroacetic acid.

59. (Amended) The method of claim 58, wherein 65 kd, 55 kd, and 14 kd bands are recovered if a fraction corresponding to the main peak obtained during the high pressure liquid chromatography is subjected to sodium dodecyl sulfate polyacrylamide gel electrophoresis.

76. (Amended) A therapeutic agent for stimulating the immune system comprising an isolated peptide or protein having lectinic properties and comprising the amino acid sequence of SEQ ID NO:5.

82. (Amended) A therapeutic agent for stimulating the immune system comprising an isolated peptide or protein, wherein the amino acid sequence of SEQ ID NO:3 comprises the amino acid sequence of the peptide or protein, wherein the peptide or protein has lectinic properties, and wherein the peptide or protein is recognized by an antibody specific to an isolated peptide or protein having lectinic properties and comprising the amino acid sequence of SEQ ID NO:3.

86. (Amended) A therapeutic agent for stimulating the immune system comprising an isolated peptide or protein, wherein the amino acid sequence of SEQ ID NO:5 comprises the amino acid sequence of the peptide or protein, wherein the peptide or protein has lectinic properties, and wherein the peptide or protein is recognized by an antibody specific to an isolated peptide or protein having lectinic properties and comprising the amino acid sequence of SEQ ID NO:4.